

*Point Judith Light* means the aid to navigation light located at Point Judith, RI, and defined as follows: Located at 41°21.7'N. lat., 71°28.9'W. long.; is 65 ft (19.8 m) above the water; and is shown from an octagonal tower 51 ft (15.5 m) high.

*Pot or Trap* means any structure or other device that, other than a net, is placed on the ocean bottom and is designed to or is capable of catching lobsters.

*Retain* means to fail to return any species specified under § 697.7 of this chapter to the sea immediately after the hook has been removed or after the species has otherwise been released from the capture gear.

*Shrimp trawl net* means any trawl net that is rigged for fishing and has a mesh size less than 2.50 inches (6.35 cm), as measured between the centers of opposite knots when pulled taut, and each try net, as defined at § 622.2 of this chapter, that is rigged for fishing and has a headrope length longer than 16.0 ft (4.9 m).

*Stocked Atlantic sturgeon* means any Atlantic sturgeon cultured in a hatchery that is placed in rivers and ocean waters of the Atlantic Coast to enhance the Atlantic sturgeon spawning stocks.

*TED* (turtle excluder device) means a device designed to be installed in a trawl net forward of the codend for the purpose of excluding sea turtles from the net.

*Weakfish* means members of the stock or population of the species *Cynoscion regalis*, found along the Atlantic Coast from southern Florida to Massachusetts Bay.

[62 FR 49455, Sept. 22, 1997, as amended at 63 FR 10155, Mar. 2, 1998; 64 FR 9450, Feb. 26, 1999; 64 FR 14077, Mar. 23, 1999]

### § 697.3 Relation to the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

The provisions of sections 307 through 311 of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, as amended, regarding prohibited acts, civil penalties, criminal offenses, civil forfeitures, and enforcement apply with respect to the regulations in this part, as if the regulations in this part were issued under the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

### § 697.4 Relation to state law.

The regulations in this part do not preempt more restrictive state laws, or state enforcement of more restrictive state laws, with respect to weakfish fishing.

### § 697.5 Civil procedures.

The civil procedure regulations at 15 CFR part 904 apply to civil penalties, permit sanctions, seizures, and forfeitures under the Atlantic Striped Bass Act and the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act, and the regulations in this part.

### § 697.6 Specifically authorized activities.

NMFS may authorize, for the acquisition of information and data, activities that are otherwise prohibited by the regulations in this part.

### § 697.7 Prohibitions.

(a) *Atlantic Coast weakfish fishery.* In addition to the prohibitions set forth in § 600.725 of this chapter, the following prohibitions apply. It is unlawful for any person to do any of the following:

(1) Fish for, harvest, or possess any weakfish less than 12 inches (30.5 cm) in total length (measured as a straight line along the bottom of the fish from the tip of the lower jaw with the mouth closed to the end of the lower tip of the tail) from the EEZ.

(2) Retain any weakfish less than 12 inches (30.5 cm) in total length taken in or from the EEZ.

(3) Fish for weakfish in the EEZ with a minimum mesh size less than 3 1/4-inch (8.3 cm) square stretch mesh (as measured between the centers of opposite knots when stretched taut) or 3 3/4-inch (9.5-cm) diamond stretch mesh for trawls and 2 7/8-inch (7.3 cm) stretch mesh for gillnets.

(4) To possess more than 150 lb (67 kg) of weakfish during any one day or trip, whichever is longer, in the EEZ when using a mesh size less than 3 1/4-inch (8.3 cm) square stretch mesh (as measured between the centers of opposite knots when stretched taut) or 3 3/4-inch (9.5 cm) diamond stretch mesh for finfish trawls and 2 7/8-inch (7.3 cm) stretch mesh for gillnets.

(5) To fish using a flynet in the EEZ off North Carolina in the area bounded as follows:

(i) On the north by a straight line connecting points 35°10.8'N. lat., 75°29.2'W. long. (3 nm off Cape Hatteras) and 35°03.5'N. lat., 75°11.8'W. long. (20 nm off Cape Hatteras).

(ii) The east by a straight line connecting points 35°03.5'N. lat., 75°11.8'W. long. (20 nm off Cape Hatteras) and 33°21.1'N. lat., 77°57.5'W. long., (about 30 nm off Cape Fear on the extension of the North Carolina/South Carolina state line into the EEZ).

(iii) On the south by a straight line connecting points 33°21.1'N. lat., 77°57.5'W. long., and 33°48.8'N. lat., 78°29.7'W. long. (3 nm off Little River Inlet on the North Carolina/South Carolina state line).

(iv) On the west by state waters.

(6) To possess any weakfish in the closed area of the EEZ, described in Paragraph (a)(5) of this section, when fishing with shrimp trawls or crab trawls.

(7) To land weakfish for commercial purposes caught in the EEZ in any state other than Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, or North Carolina.

(b) *Atlantic striped bass fishery.* In addition to the prohibitions set forth in § 600.725, the following prohibitions apply. It is unlawful for any person to do any of the following:

(1) Fish for Atlantic striped bass in the EEZ.

(2) Harvest any Atlantic striped bass from the EEZ.

(3) Possess any Atlantic striped bass in or from the EEZ, except for the following area: The EEZ within Block Island Sound, north of a line connecting Montauk Light, Montauk Point, NY, and Block Island Southeast Light, Block Island, RI; and west of a line connecting Point Judith Light, Point

Judith, RI, and Block Island Southeast Light, Block Island, RI. Within this area, possession of Atlantic striped bass is permitted, provided no fishing takes place from the vessel while in the EEZ and the vessel is in continuous transit.

(4) Retain any Atlantic striped bass taken in or from the EEZ.

(c) *American Lobster fishery.* In addition to the prohibitions set forth in § 600.725 of this chapter and the restrictions set forth in § 648.80 of this chapter, it is unlawful for a vessel that has a vessel permit issued under 50 CFR 649.4, that takes lobsters by any method other than pots or traps, or that takes lobsters on a fishing trip in the EEZ by any method other than pots or traps to do any of the following:

(1) For each fishing trip of 24 hours or less duration, land American lobsters in excess of 100 lobsters, or parts thereof.

(2) During any 5-day period, land American lobsters in excess of 500 lobsters, or parts thereof.

(3) For each fishing trip of 5 or more days duration, land American lobsters in excess of 500 lobsters, or parts thereof.

(d) *Atlantic sturgeon fishery.* In addition to the prohibitions set forth in § 600.725, the following prohibitions apply. It is unlawful for any person to do any of the following:

(1) Fish for Atlantic sturgeon in the EEZ.

(2) Harvest any Atlantic sturgeon from the EEZ.

(3) Possess any natural or stocked Atlantic sturgeon in or from the EEZ.

(4) Retain any Atlantic sturgeon taken in or from the EEZ.

(5) Possess any natural Atlantic sturgeon parts, including Atlantic sturgeon eggs, in the EEZ.

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